

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MASERU 0974

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LT, RH, SF

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER JONATHAN'S VIEWS ON SOUTHERN AFRICA

SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER JONATHAN SAYS LESOTHO SHOULD BE CONSULTED BY U.S. ON SOUTH AFRICA PROBLEM. GOL REJECTS HOMELANDS AND WILL NOT RECOGNIZE TRANSKEI. GOL IS ANTICIPATING OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS SA PROBLEM WITH ASST SECY SCHAUFELLE DURING HIS VISIT HERE IN EARLY OCTOBER.

1. CHARGE WAS RECEIVED BY PRIME MINISTER DR. LEABUA JONATHAN AUGUST 26 FOLLOWING PM'S RETURN FROM COLOMBO. THE PRIME MINISTER OPENED THE CONVERSATION WITH EXTREMELY CORDIAL AND WARM EXPRESSION OF HOSPITALITY AND DESIRE FOR CONTINUING COOPERATION BETWEEN GOL AND EMBASSY MASERU. ACKNOWLEDGING THE FACT THAT THE AMBASSADOR IS RESIDENT IN GABORONE, THE PM EMPHASIZED THE RESPONSIBILITY THAT THIS PLACES ON THE CHARGE MASERU TO ASSIST THE AMBASSADOR IN HIS WORK WITH THE GOL.

2. TURNING RATHER QUICKLY TO THE TROUBLES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, THE PM REFERRED TO THE SO-CALLED "FRONT LINE STATES". HE NOTED THAT THE SECRETARY AND PRINCIPAL DEPARTMENT OFFICERS HAVE VISITED THE CAPITALS

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OF THESE STATES BUT HAVE NOT COME TO MASERU. HE ACCEPTED THAT THE

SO-CALLED FRONT LINE STATES ARE INDEED THAT VIS-A-VIS RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA BUT, REGARDING SOUTH AFRICA AND THE PROBLEMS THERE, THE SITUATION IS QUITE DIFFERENT, HE SAID. WITH RESPECT TO SOUTH AFRICA LESOTHO IS NOT JUST "FRONT LINE" BUT "BEHIND THE ENEMY LINES". BETTER THAN ANY OTHER GOVERNMENT OR PEOPLE, THE PM ASSERTED, LESOTHO KNOWS WHAT IS GOING ON IN SOUTH AFRICA. AT SOWETO AND ELSEWHERE IN THE RECENT DISTURBANCES IN SOUTH AFRICA, PEOPLE FROM LESOTHO HAVE DIED SIDE BY SIDE WITH OTHERS. THE GOL IS IN THE BEST POSITION TO PROVIDE EXPERT BRIEFING ON WHAT ARE THE WISHES AND AIMS OF THE VARIOUS GROUPS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

3. THE PM THEN TURNED TO SOME SPECIFICS. WHAT, HE ASKED, IS THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES VIS-A-VIS THE HOMELANDS? THE GOL, HE SAID, HAS MADE ITS POSITION CLEAR. WHATEVER COMES OF THE SO-CALLED INDEPENDENCE OF TRANSKEI, THERE ARE SOME THINGS WHICH THE GOVERNMENT OF LESOTHO REJECTS OUTRIGHT. LESOTHO REJECTS THE PARCELLING OUT OF SOUTH AFRICA. IT REGARDS SOUTH AFRICA AS A SINGLE, UNIFIED STATE AND GOL REJECTS WHITE MINORITY GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA AND GIVES ITS FULL SUPPORT TO THE INTRODUCTION OF MAJORITY RULE. THE REASON THAT LESOTHO IS AN INDEPENDENT SOVEREIGN COUNTRY TODAY IS THAT IT WILL NOT ACCEPT CONDITIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA. GIVEN THE DESIRED CHANGE THERE, LESOTHO WOULD CONSIDER ENTERING INTO A FEDERATED RELATIONSHIP OR EVEN BECOMING AN INTEGRAL PART OF A UNIFIED SOUTH AFRICA.

4. LESOTHO IS NON-ALIGNED, THE PM SAID. IT WISHES TO STAY OUT OF CONTENTIONS THAT MAY ARISE BETWEEN THE SUPER POWERS. ON THE OTHER HAND, LESOTHO REJECTS "ATHEISTIC, MATERIALISTIC COMMUNISM". LESOTHO IS A CHRISTIAN COUNTRY AND IT LOOKS TO THE UNITED STATES FOR ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT.

5. I THANKED THE PRIME MINISTER FOR HIS CORDIAL RECEPTION ANDSTOOK THE OCCASION TO EMPHASIZE WITH HIM THE LENGTH AND VARIETY OF MY SERVICE IN AFRICAN AFFAIRS. HE DID NOT RAISE THE ISSUE OF HAVING AN AMERICAN AMBASSADOR RESIDENT IN MASERU BUT I FELT IT WAS WELL TO HEAD OFF ANY SUCH POSSIBILITY BY BUILDING UP MY OWN IMAGE FOR HIM. TURNING TO SOUTHERN AFRICAN PROBLEMS, I TOLD THE PM THAT THE UNITED STATES IS COMMITTED TO SEEKING EARLY AND PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS WHICH WOULD PROVIDE EQUALITY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL PEOPLES/ I EMPHASIZED THAT MAJORITY RULE IS THE FUNDAMENTAL

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BASIS OF OUR OWN FORM OF GOVERNMENT AND THAT WE ACCEPT IT AS THE FORMULA FOR AN ULTIMATE SOLUTION IN SOUTH AFRICA. ANSWERING HIS QUESTION CONCERNING THE HOMELANDS, I SAID THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT FULLY DEVELOPED ITS POSITION ON THIS MATTER. I TOLD HIM IT IS UNDER STUDY IN WASHINGTON AND THAT AN IMPORTANT INGREDIENT IN DETERMINING THE U.S. POSITION ON RECOGNITION OF THE HOMELANDS WILL BE THE OPINION OF AFRICAN LEADERS. I ASSURED HIM I WOULD TRANSMIT HIS VIEWS TO

THE SECRETARY AS REQUESTED. TURNING TO HIS REMARKS ABOUT THE VISITS OF THE SECRETARY AND HIS PRINCIPAL OFFICERS IN THE FRONT LINE CAPITALS, I ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA QUESTIONS ARE MATTERS OF FIRST PRIORITY IN THE U.S. VIEW. I REFERRED TO THE COMING VISIT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHAUFLE TO MASERU ON THE OCCASION OF LESOTHO'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE AND NOTED THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAD INFORMED ME THAT THE GOL WISHES TO TALK WITH MR. SCHAUFLE ON SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS. I CLOSED BY REFERRING TO U.S. ASSISTANCE TO LESOTHO AND CITED THE FACT THAT OUR AID PROGRAM HERE IS GROWING AND THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO CONSIDER ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE IN AREAS WHERE THE GOL AND THE USG AGREE THAT SUCH ASSISTANCE WOULD BE APPROPRIATE AND FEASIBLE.

6. THE PM IN CLOSING THE INTERVIEW REFERRED TO MY REMARKS ABOUT U.S. COMMITMENT TO PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA. HE SAID PEACEFUL CHANGE IN SA WOULD DEPEND ON WHETHER THE LEADERSHIP MOVED TO ACCOMMODATE CHANGE OR WHETHER IT ATTEMPTS ONLY TO PRESERVE THE STATUS QUO.

7. COMMENT: THE PRE-OCCUPATION OF GOVERNMENT LEADERS WITH THE NAM AND THEIR ABSENCE IN COLOMBO HAD DELAYED MY MAKING SUBSTANTIVE CONTACTS. I FEEL NOW THE DOOR IS OPEN. THESE FIRST CONTACTS HAVE CONFIRMED THE EARLIER INDICATIONS REPORTED BY THIS EMBASSY THAT THE FOL FEELS RESENTFUL AND CONCLUDES THAT IT IS BEING LEFT OUT OF SUBSTANTIVE CONSULTATIONS ON FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. THE PM MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE DRAWS A DISTINCTION BETWEEN CONSULTATION ON RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA, WHERE HE DOES NOT SEE THE GOL INTIMATELY INVOLVED, AND TALKS ABOUT FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA WHERE HE CONCLUDES LESOTHO SHOULD BE A PRIME CONTACT FOR AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVES. HWE BELIEVE THAT ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHAUFLE'S VISIT HERE WILL GO SOME AY TOWARDS ASSUAGING THESE FEELINGS
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AMONG GOL LEADERSHIP. ON THE HOMELANDS QUESTION, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE GOL IS NOT NOW PREPARED TO RECOGNIZE THE TRANSKEI. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE FOREIGN MINISTER IN SEPARATE REMARKS EXPLAINED THAT HE UNDERSTANDS MANTANZIMA'S DESIRE TO ACHIEVE WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY S OME
OF THE BENEFITS OF INDEPENDENCE FROM SOUTH AFRICA EVEN THOUGH THE HOMELANDS ARE NOT A PERMANENT SOLUTION TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN PROBLEM.
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